UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.6/1998/L.3
9 March 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Forty-second session
2-13 March 1998
Agenda item 3 (c)

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN:
IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTION
IN THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

Botswana,* Canada,* Democratic Republic of the Congo,* Finland, Kyrgyzstan,* Malawi,* Mauritius,* Mozambique,* Namibia,* South Africa,* Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania,* and Zambia*: draft resolution

Human rights and land rights discrimination

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[3] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[4] the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

* In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

[1] Resolution 217A(III).

[2] Resolution 2200A(XXI).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Resolution 34/180.

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adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights,[5] and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[6]

Noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex,

Noting also that the States Parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights have the obligation to ensure the equal right of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, and concerned, however, that despite these various instruments extensive discrimination against women continues to exist,

Gravely concerned that in many countries, the treatment accorded to women, whether in terms of property rights, land rights, rights of inheritance, laws related to marriage and divorce or the rights to acquire nationality, manage property or seek employment, reflect the inequality between women and men,

Also concerned that in situations of poverty, women are disproportionately affected and have the least access to productive resources, food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs,

Recognizing that land is a valuable resource, and that secure land rights are key rights for the economic empowerment of women,

Also recognizing that the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of life is essential for the full and complete development of a country,

Reaffirming the equal rights of women and men, as enshrined, inter alia, in the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

1. Stresses the need for full and urgent implementation of the rights of women, as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[3] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;[4]

2. Urges all States to take all necessary measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of all human rights and

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[5] Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

[6] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men, and to take effective action against violations of those rights and freedoms;

3. Calls upon States:

(a) To set goals and develop and implement gender-sensitive strategies for addressing the rights and needs of women;

(b) To generate social support to change the social and cultural patterns of conduct of women and men with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices that are based on the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for women and men;

(c) To develop innovative activities at all levels, including human rights education, to increase women's awareness of their human rights and the mechanisms that are available to protect and enforce women's full enjoyment of them, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of information materials on these rights to all sectors of society;

(d) To ensure women's equal rights with men in the areas of education, health and nutrition, and to provide equal access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes;

4. Urges States to pay particular attention to women and their rights and needs in designing and implementing development programmes, and specifically to address the feminization of poverty and its root causes, including secure land tenure;

5. Urges States to design and revise laws to ensure that women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through the right to equal inheritance, and to undertake administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital, appropriate technologies, access to markets and information;

6. Calls upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in the exercise of her mandate, to increase awareness that land rights discrimination is a violation of human rights and that in addressing the right to development secure land tenure for women should be taken into account;

7. Requests the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, take into account land rights discrimination and its negative impact on women in all poverty eradication programmes and policies;

8. Calls upon all States and all relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-third session on initiatives related to the present resolution.